

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
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March 28, 2000 LB 835, 1234

January 12, referred to Natural Resources Committee. It was advanced to General File. I do have committee amendments pending, Mr. President.

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Senator Schrock, you're recognized to open on the bill.

SENATOR SCHROCK: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, today we're going to discuss a bill that would I think increase the use of ethanol in the state of Nebraska. As many of you know, on March 20 the EPA administrator, Carol Browner, and Agricultural Secretary Dan Glickman, announced actions by the Clinton-Gore administration to significantly reduce or eliminate the use of the fuel additive MTBE and boost the use of safe alternatives like ethanol. The administration is taking these actions in order to protect drinking water, preserve clean air benefits, and promote greater production and use of renewable fuels like ethanol. Does this mean we should do nothing in Nebraska? I don't believe so. We don't know how long it will take the federal government to act. We, of course, don't know what kind of legislation acts they may take. I would like to think long term and be proactive in the state of Nebraska. I think Nebraska should take a leadership position on this issue. Senator Dierks had LB 835, livestock pricing markets, last year, Competitive Markets Livestock Act. We were in leadership there. We were the first country to divest financial interest in doing business with South Africa. We were the first state to do that. We are a unique state in that we have a successful public power system and our Unicameral by itself is unique. I think it's very interesting that the state of Minnesota requires ethanol content in their fuel sold in Minnesota. The only exception is if the fuel is dispensed in a container of less than six gallons. Interestingly enough...by the way, this took place October 1, 1997...interestingly enough, Minnesota doesn't have any problem with MTBE spills. The state of Iowa is looking at a similar bill to LB 1234, similar to the Connealy amendment which will be proposed, that we're doing here in the state of Nebraska today. The Iowa approach would also eliminate the MTBE content to incidental levels, and it would require that all gasoline sold in the state of Iowa would be at the lowest grade and must be an ethanol blend. That would mean that there could be two grades of 87 octane sold, but one of them would have to be an